

**DRIVE FOCUSED.  
DRIVE SMART.  
GET HOME SAFELY.**

**YOUR DECISIONS  
DRIVE YOUR SAFETY**

## WHAT IS DISTRACTED DRIVING?

Distraction occurs when drivers divert their attention from the driving task to focus on some other activity. Distracted driving includes:

- **Visual Distraction:** Reading a text message, looking up directions, “rubber necking” (i.e., craning one’s neck to get a better view) at a crash site
- **Manual Distraction:** Reaching for things inside the vehicle, using a hand-held device, adjusting the radio, eating or drinking, applying makeup
- **Cognitive Distraction:** Talking on the phone, arguing with a passenger, thinking about your next appointment<sup>1</sup>

Distracted driving is not a new issue. However, the number of in-vehicle technologies and the growing capabilities of smart phones and other hand-held mobile devices have increased the frequency with which today’s drivers are tempted to take their minds off their driving. This is often made even more dangerous when drivers also take their eyes off the road and their hands off the wheel.

## DISTRACTED DRIVING – THE FACTS

- 1 According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), at any given moment during daylight hours, an estimated 3.8% of drivers in the United States are using a hand-held cell phone.<sup>2</sup>
- 2 In a 2010 survey of Fortune 500 companies that had implemented total cell phone bans, only 7% of respondents said productivity decreased, while 19% thought productivity had actually increased.<sup>3</sup>
- 3 In a 2011 survey, nearly one-third of all U.S. drivers 18 to 64 years old reported reading or sending text or email messages while driving.<sup>4</sup> Distracted driving led to 391,000 injuries and almost 3,500 deaths in the United States in 2015. Distraction was a factor in 14% of all crashes and 10% of fatal crashes.<sup>5</sup>
- 4 Fifteen states prohibit all drivers from using hand-held cell phones while driving, and 47 states ban text messaging while driving.<sup>6</sup>

# WHAT CAN AN EMPLOYER DO?

Corporate road safety policies, backed up with training and enforcement, can be a powerful tool for changing driving behavior.

Employers can follow what safety experts and legislators know to be an effective formula for changing behavior within their own business environments by issuing and enforcing corporate policies. In the workplace, the formula above translates to this:



If you are interested in developing a corporate policy to restrict or ban completely the use of mobile phones while driving on company business, comprehensive employer cell phone policy kits are available on the National Safety Council's (NSC) website at <http://www.nsc.org/DistractedDrivingDocuments/CPK/NSC-Full-Cell-Phone-Policy-Kit.pdf>.

The National Safety Council suggests a minimum period of 4 weeks to roll out a corporate cell phone policy. Larger organizations may need more time. Use these Drive Safely Work Week™ materials in combination with the NSC toolkit to prepare your workforce for the successful roll-out of a corporate mobile device policy.

<sup>1</sup>National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Distracted Driving at Work

<sup>2</sup><https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812326>

<sup>3</sup>National Safety Council. (2011). Research insights: Employer policies, employee perspectives on distracted driving at Fortune 500 companies. Membership Advantage, 15(1). Retrieved from [http://www.nsc.org/safety\\_road/Distracted\\_Driving/Documents/Fortune%20500%20Cell%20Phone%20Policies%20-%20Membership%20Advantage.pdf](http://www.nsc.org/safety_road/Distracted_Driving/Documents/Fortune%20500%20Cell%20Phone%20Policies%20-%20Membership%20Advantage.pdf)

<sup>4</sup>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Mobile Device Use While Driving - United States and Seven European Countries, 2011. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, March 15, 2013/62(10); 177-182

<sup>5</sup>Distracted Driving 2015, Traffic Safety Facts [https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.dot.gov/files/documents/812\\_381\\_distracteddriving2015.pdf](https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.dot.gov/files/documents/812_381_distracteddriving2015.pdf)

<sup>6</sup><http://www.ghsa.org/state-laws/issues/Distracted-Driving>